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THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY.
Hongkong, 15th April, 1897.
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The Daily Press.
HONGKONG, JUNE 23, 1897.
LETTER by little the Chinese Government
are learning what are the requirements of
Western countries in regard to the recep-
tion of their Ambassadors, and what is
meant by terms of equality. Between the
ceremonial that attended the audience given
to M. TSENGTUNG, Special Ambassador from
Russia, by the Emperor KANGHI, on the 22nd
November, 1920, and that which marked
the reception accorded to the Baron
LA CZIKANN, the Austro-Hungarian Minister,
by the Emperor KWANG SU in May,
1897, there was indeed a marked distinction.
On the first named occasion the Russian
representative, although received with some
cordiality, was made to feel that it was a
great condescension on the part of the son of
Heaven to be allowed to enter the Imperial
presence; after having formally presented
his credentials he and his suite were made
to perform the humiliating *tschow*. Nine
times the company were compelled to bow,
every third time standing up and then
kneeling again. This degrading ceremony
has been firmly refused by the Foreign
Ministers since the opening of China after
the first British war, but it was the work
of quite a quarter of a century to induce the
Emperor to grant the audience within the
precincts of the Prohibited City. Even up
to the most recent reception every effort was
made to inflict humiliations on the Ministers by
keeping them waiting and, by holding the
function in the Hall of the Tributary Nations
recalled, to make it appear to the Chinese
people that they were Ambassadors from
vassal states bringing tribute to the Dragon
Throne. According to the Peking correspon-
dent of a Shanghai contemporary, Baron
LA CZIKANN has improved on this, and
has compelled the Chinese Government to
admit not only himself and his suite but
quite an imposing escort within the
precincts of the Imperial Court. The Baron
in addition to his secretaries had with him
a number of naval officers, and on the day
of audience they sat out in ten chairs, all in
glittering uniform, the procession being
headed by two mounted Chinese servants,
while a body guard of ten Austrian soldiers,
carrying their rifles, followed, two more
mounted Chinese bringing up the rear. On

arrival at the entrance gate of the place of
audience, the guards appeared greatly
alarmed at the sight of the foreign escort,
and refused to allow it to pass. An alter-
cation ensued, and it was only calmed down
by the arrival of Prince CHING, President of
the Taungli Yamen, and a number of high
officials, who attempted to induce the Aus-
trian Minister to leave the troops outside
the Palace. The Baron, however, resolute,
and threatened to return to the Legation without
having the audience, if his escort, which he
insisted was part of the suite designed speci-
ally by his Imperial master, was not allowed
to accompany him. The Chinese Ministers
strongly demurred to this request, but the
Minister was inflexible, and rather than al-
low the ceremony, so carefully pre-arranged,
to lapse, they consented to allow the escort
to proceed to the Pavilion inside the pre-
cincts sacred to the Imperial Court.
This was a distinct triumph over Chinese
conservatism, and it will no doubt be re-
peated when Prince OUKTOMSKY, the
Russian Ambassador, is received in au-
dience at Peking. The CHANG'S Repre-
sentative will take good care not to accept
anything less than the dignity accorded to
the Minister of the Emperor FRANCIS
JOSEPH. The time has arrived when the
military feeling of the superiority of the Cen-
tral Kingdom and the occupant of the
Dragon Throne over all outside nations
and sovereigns will have to be formally
laid aside even in Peking and by the
Chinese Emperor himself. The humiliat-
ing defeat of the vast but inert Empire
by little Japan has fairly stripped the last
remnant of glamour from the faded pre-
sences of Chinese splendour and strength.
Because of the extent of the Empire, its
extensive and varied resources, it was be-
lieved, as an article of faith, that a year with
China would be long and exhausting even
to a victor. But the rottenness and the
corruption which have for ages reigned in
the administration rendered the overthrow
of the Chinese armies an easy matter by
disciplined troops, and the same success
would make the partitioning or conquest
of the Empire a comparatively simple task.
The Russians are about to obtain a footing
in Manchuria, which they will find no
difficulty in rendering permanent. They
have only to wait and wait, and the whole
of the northern provinces will fall into the
Great Bear's mouth like ripe fruit. With
the completion of the great Trans-Siberian
Railway a new era will dawn for North
China, an era of further decay and gradual
drift into the arms of Russia. Had the
Chinese Imperial Government accepted the
advice of foreigners twenty years ago and
made great trunk railways through the
Empire her crushing defeat by Japan might
have been averted, and the obligations in-
curred to Russia would not have been
necessary. It is now too late to go back.
It is, also, seemingly, too late to hope for
timely reform, for with LI HUNG-CHANG and
SHEW TAO-SHI still to the fore and general
helplessness on the part of the Grand
Council, the prospect of a stronger adminis-
tration being formed seems most unlikely.
Like the other great powers, in the south-east
corner of Europe, China may take an un-
capable hands off attitude at Peking her
gradual decay and eventual dismemberment
are inevitable. While therefore the loss of
the substance of Chinese power is not dimly
foreseen, the Emperor KWANG SU need
feel little regret over the loss of the shadow
of supremacy—never much more than a
figment of the imagination—over the civilized
world so long claimed for his predecessors
by a vain and egotistical people. The dis-
appearance of this futile shadow ought, had
he any strength of character, to teach him
to grasp more firmly the substance of power
still left him in sovereignty ruler of three
hundred millions of subjects.

THE SHANGHAI WOODS
The annual report of The Mission to Seamen
was presented at St. Martin's Town Hall, Trin-
tagua Street, W.C. on Wednesday, May 5th,
when Sir William Wilson, late Accountant-
General of the Navy, presided, presided to many
evidences of one having both better men and
better sailors, the improved conditions of life
aboard, and the less vicious state of the water-
parades of great seafarers.
Founded sixty years ago, when Her Majesty
Victoria reigned, the income of The Mission to
Seamen was £38,294 last year. It ministers to
sailors and fishermen in the principal seaports,
and at all the large outer anchorages or roads,
steadily to increase. A great many har-
bours abroad, through with British ships, are
still destitute of spiritual provision for their
souls, and the religious ministrations which in
many other ports are quite inadequate. Still,
as compared with 1877, much progress has been
made.
Sixty years ago the ships had it much their
own way in most of our larger seaports. It
was a usual thing for foreign-going ships to
leave the docks in a state of intoxication, often
so helpless as to endanger the navigation of
their ships. This rarely happens now. In the
last year, for instance, only one ship was in-
capable of leaving the docks in a state of in-
sobriety. As many as 7,500 seamen took the last ab-
solving pledge of The Mission to Seamen last year,
and those of our larger seaports are fre-
quently met with.
Besides what sailors generously contributed
more directly to the funds of The Mission to
Seamen in 1896, they donated £1,477 to God's
devoted offerings in thirty of The Mission to
Seamen Churches and Institutions. They con-
tributed their earliest intention to serve God
faithfully by paying out of their own earnings,
on board their ships to the chaplain in the last
thirty years, as much as £2,532 for bibles
and prayer books. Whilst, in the last seven-
teen years, sailors bought from the Society's
chaplains and readers in various ports 94,388
bibles and prayer books. They were last
year's 4,512 recipients of the Holy Communion
by sailors from The Mission to Seamen chap-
lains alone.
Whilst there was but one chaplain employed
to minister to crews abroad, when the Queen
ascended the throne, now sixty-nine Mission-
aries and boats carry 110 Missions to Seamen
chaplains and readers, 48,000 sailors, fishing
vessels, barges, and light-vessels, and to the
isolated inhabitants of remote light-houses,
isle, deep-water fords, and coastwards. There
are 37 Missions to Seamen Churches and In-
stitutions, and the special use of sea-going men
when ashore. Volunteer lay work on board
ships on the high seas is so encouraged that
upwards of 1,200 devout seamen are pro-
moted to minister to crews abroad. The Mis-
sion to Seamen is now a powerful and promi-
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of the British flag, and a...
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THE AUSTRALIAN MAIL.

The following telegrams are from Australia...
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London, 9th May.
The South African Political Society is strongly...

London, 9th May.
The Transvaal Government has engaged a...

London, 9th May.
Captain Nesbitt, of the Mashedland Mounted...

London, 9th May.
His Holiness the Pope will be remembered at...

London, 11th May.
The improved outlook in the Transvaal and...

London, 11th May.
The fund initiated by the Princess of Wales...

London, 11th May.
The German army is to be equipped with...

London, 11th May.
The gallantry of the British volunteers saved...

London, 12th May.
Heavy snowstorms have occurred in Wilshire...

London, 12th May.
Mr. Spalding, who was endeavouring to...

London, 12th May.
The following programme has been arranged...

London, 12th May.
June 21.—The Queen will make a semi-State...

London, 12th May.
June 22.—Her Majesty will go to State, at...

London, 12th May.
June 23.—There will be a huge garden party...

London, 12th May.
June 24.—Her Majesty will return in semi-State...

London, 12th May.
June 25.—A grand State banquet will be...

London, 12th May.
June 26.—The Prince of Wales will review...

London, 12th May.
June 27.—Her Majesty reviews the troops at...

London, 12th May.
The strength of the rebel chief Tuto in...

London, 12th May.
The British authorities are abolishing the...

London, 12th May.
The Berlin authorities are abolishing the...

London, 12th May.
The harvest in Greece.

London, 12th May.
Unless peace be proclaimed before the...

London, 12th May.
The British Chamber of Commerce has asked...

London, 12th May.
The steamship *Orizaba*, sailing on the 23rd...

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SHIPPING REPORT.

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BANKS.

HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION.

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INSURANCE.

PHENIX FIRE OFFICE.

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COMMERCIAL.

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VESSELS EXPECTED.

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